Logistics Data – The Secret Weapon in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT)

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Since America began its counter-attack after the terrorist acts of Sept. 11, 2001, the Defense Logistics Information Service (DLIS) and the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service (DRMS) have worked even harder to meet the logistics needs of U.S. and Coalition Forces.

DLIS supports Army logisticians delivering critical equipment, supplies and ammunition to Soldiers on the front lines. Here, Soldiers from C Co., 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, search for insurgents in the Al Thawra district of Baghdad. (Photo courtesy of DOD.)

Both organizations have long strived to support their pieces of the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) mission — to bring the right item, to the right place, at the right time — goals that any logistician can appreciate. With its role in the acquisition process, DLIS:

• Supports provisioning efforts and identifies the need for and validates available technical documentation for cataloging purposes.
• Standardizes assignment of item names and maintains accurate item descriptions.
• Makes logistics information more interoperable between services.

DLIS is ready to help Army logisticians meet the added challenges of Joint and coalition logistics that come with the GWOT. The National Stock Numbers (NSNs) assigned by DLIS are valuable tools to help those engaged in that fight obtain the replacement parts they need. Customers can search DRMS' global inventory online, often using the NSN to help ensure that any reusable items they find are what they need. In fact, the Logistics Information Network allows Soldiers to search the DRMS inventory simultaneously with other supply sources.

DLIS manages logistics information for supply items used by the U.S. government, NATO, other international governments and private industry. DLIS personnel are responsible for administering the Federal Catalog System (FCS), a single cataloging system with uniform identification for all military supplies, providing economical, efficient and effective supply management. The FCS gathers, processes and distributes logistics information for more than 6.2 million supply items — ranging from weapon systems to nuts and bolts — used by

the U.S. military and its allies. The FCS operates through an automated data processing system, the Federal Logistics Information System (FLIS), which contains billions of characters of logistics data.

The NSN data stored in FLIS includes the following mandatory information:

• Item name.
• Federal supply class (FSC).
• Manufacturer's part number.
• Price.
• Unit of issue.
• Shelf life code.
• Precious metal information.
• Automated data processing information.

When available, descriptive data can include the following:

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• Dimensions.
• Tolerances.
  • Material.
  • Finishes.
  • Material parts.
  • End item/used on applications.

Whenever there is a major change in operations tempo, the most immediate impact on DLIS and DRMS is usually noticed first at the Battle Creek, MI, Customer Contact Center (CCC). CCC agents began working around the clock after the 9/11 terrorist attacks and saw a 300-percent increase in military call volumes in the first 2 months of *Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)*, according to Theresa Riley, DLIS' Customer Support Branch Chief. Military callers generally ask about the availability of items and if there are suitable substitutes

A DLA Contingency Support Team member checks an incoming shipment bound for Afghanistan in support of Soldiers and Marines during *Operation Enduring Freedom*. (Photo courtesy of DLA.)

available. Knowing that their efforts are helping American troops overseas makes Riley and her team proud.

"It is really an awesome feeling," Riley reflected. "We all know the importance of getting Soldiers the items they need. All my agents take great pride in what they do."

When the GWOT was taken to the Afghanistan mountains, warfighter calls increased dramatically. In one instance, an Air Force C-5 aircraft was grounded in Spain because of a ruptured hydraulic line. In less than 4 hours, CCC agents were able to resolve the issue so that the aircraft could continue its mission.

Additionally, DLIS supports the GWOT by participating in DLA Contingency Support Teams (DCSTs). Numerous employees from the Hart-Dole-Inouye Federal Center in Battle Creek have volunteered and served in the theater of military operations, including Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait,

by providing logistics and other support as required. For example, a call from a DCST member stationed in Iraq asked for help locating 3.5 million rounds of ammunition to supply the newly formed Iraqi army. By researching available databases and systems and contacting item managers and ammunition manufacturers, approximately 8 million rounds were located, and the information was provided to the requester for use in purchasing the required ammunition.

When another DLIS employee deployed to Iraq needed characteristic details on four NATO stock numbers for "rapid assembly of protective walls," the International Cataloging Division contacted its counterparts in the United Kingdom and the manufacturing company. That call helped obtain the

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number of sections, height, width and other requested specifications. Besides the required information, a Web site was provided that supplied pictures of the materiel. The complete technical information was added to the cataloging records in both the U.K. and U.S. national catalog files and is now available to all U.S. and NATO users.

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Another challenge came when the Army Materiel Command (AMC) Logistics Support Activity sent an urgent request for supplier information on 1,153 NSNs in support of the Force Flow Requirements Analysis Program (FFRAP) under development by AMC's G-3. They were required to provide the FFRAP's status to the AMC commander. The data set required an automated FLIS extraction be provided in a specialized format. This request was met within 24 hours.

Another obstacle that DLIS personnel helped logisticians overcome involved reducing "frustrated cargo" in Iraq. Frustrated cargo is cargo that never reached the person who ordered it. A database extract, provided by DLIS personnel, used various cataloging data to help the supply personnel get more items back into the supply system versus sending the items to the disposal office. The Pentagon and the Joint Chiefs of Staff are tracking this issue.

DLA's mission is to get the right items to the right place at the right time — by any means possible — to support warfighters. Here, cargo is offloaded at Port of Ash Shuaiba, Kuwait. (U.S. Army photo by Stephen Larsen, Public Affairs Officer, Defense Communications and Army Transmission Systems.)

At the outset of combat operations in Iraq, DRMS ensured that Soldiers had sufficient quantities of concertina wire that was shipped from base camps in the Balkans that had been closed. (Photo courtesy of DLA.)

When a customer deployed in support of *OIF* requested priority access to the DEfense Supply eXpert system (DESX), customers were immediately provided user identifications (IDs), passwords and personal ID numbers. This information allowed requestors to access DESX within minutes of their call. The automated computer system is used for tracking DOD supply requisitions and inventory items as well as placing or modifying requisitions.

Immediate action was taken when a customer support request for Mission Incapable Awaiting Parts was received from Mildenhall, England. Two plain, self-aligning bearings were needed, and both the DLA-Europe (DLA-E) Customer Support and Readiness Divisions and DLIS personnel worked to locate these bearings within the U.K. and immediately ship them to Mildenhall Air Base. Additionally, DLIS personnel located extra parts at McConnell Air

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Force Base, KS, through a commercial contact at New Hampshire Ball Bearing. These items were going on a strut forward beam installation on a KC-135R aircraft. Together, DLIS and DLA-E worked with the customer to implement a long-term solution to ensure that these critical parts are available in the future.

When WD-40® was thought to be unobtainable in Iraq and a congressman raised the non-supply issue, Army headquarters came to DLIS catalogers for assistance with identifying the many different NSNs used for the lubricant. The information helped Army spokesmen prepare for a *60 Minutes* interview by identifying how much lubricant was available in the military theater. Catalogers provided information on all items that referenced a part number for WD-40, items that were stock listed using the Military Performance Specification for WD-40

— MIL-PRF-32033 — and those items stock listed under the original WD-40 specification — MIL-C-1309. Applicable management data, such as supply source, price and unit of issue for all identified Army-used NSNs was provided, and through additional research, the Army provided CBS producers with enough new information that the program was not aired.

DLIS catalogers' expertise in international codification helped them support the Singapore National Codification Bureau (NCB), which requested assistance through the International Cataloging Division. Sourcing problems for parts on Singapore's M113 and M728 vehicle fleet were resolved when research on a list of M113 and M728 parts identified a possible supply support. "Last-source" data were obtained and provided to the NCB. Copies of military drawings for almost every item involved were obtained through the U.S. Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command (TACOM) and forwarded. The drawings enabled Singapore to use competitive solicitation of alternate production in-country.

DLIS's work in international codification also promises to enhance future acquisition processes because of "smart codification." By accepting standard elements of the NATO Codifications System into its commercial cataloging information, the Electronic Commerce Code Management Association (ECCMA) has helped to create a new benchmark *International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 22745*. This standard seeks to assimilate the process and procedures for ECCMA Open Technical Directory (eOTD) maintenance as well as the naming convention and the design rules for definitions. Likewise, it will provide guidelines for incorporating eOTD tags into computer-aided design (CAD) applications.

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The resulting codification process uses the eOTD to support a future functional capability that allows systems to seamlessly combine CAD and product data management into a Standard for the Exchange of Product (STEP) Model Data file that contains characteristic data encoded according to a standard catalog. The new STEP files will help suppliers characterize products accurately, consistently and efficiently at the source as an integral part of the design process, thus helping acquisition organizations more easily identify suitable products to meet their requirements. The smart

codification prototype is scheduled for unveiling at the 10th International Symposium on Codification, Oct. 10-13, 2005, in Edinburgh, Scotland.

DLIS has a strong history with the Army and continues to support it, the other military services, government agencies and the international community by providing logistics data in user-friendly products and services. DLIS's expertise in provisioning support initiatives, cataloging and managing information makes it an important contributor to electronic commerce between the U.S. government and its many suppliers. For additional information about DLIS, visit **http://www.dla.mil/dlis** or call the DLIS Public Affairs Office at (269) 961-7019.
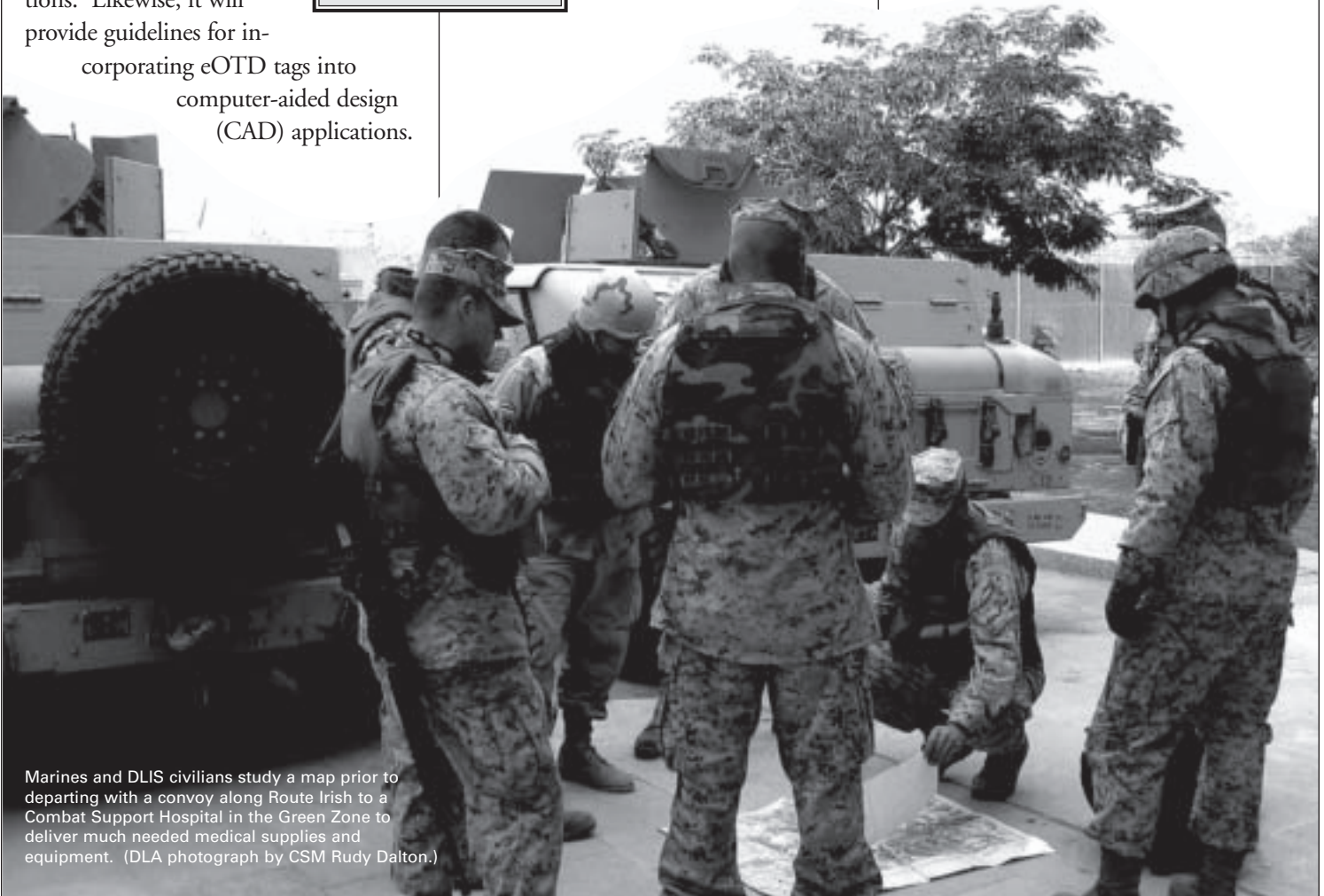
Marines and DLIS civilians study a map prior to departing with a convoy along Route Irish to a Combat Support Hospital in the Green Zone to deliver much needed medical supplies and equipment. (DLA photograph by CSM Rudy Dalton.)

Where We've Been

DLIS, formerly known as the Defense Logistics Services Center, is closely connected to the FCS, begun in 1914 when the Navy first published a Naval Depot Supply and Stock Catalog. At that time, the publication was the nearest thing to a uniform federal stock catalog. It became the *Federal Standard Stock Catalog* in 1929.

The enormous number of new items flooding the military supply systems during World War II often created duplication, lack of uniformity and inefficiency because each military service had its own means of parts identification. President Franklin D. Roosevelt recognized the costly duplication and the danger to both national security and the economy, so in 1945 he instructed the Bureau of the Budget to prepare and maintain a U.S. Standard Commodity Catalog. *Public Law 436, Defense Cataloging and Standardization Act*, was passed in 1952, further solidifying the FCS.

DOD consolidated military cataloging components at DLIS in 1997. This milestone event in the DLIS evolution has solidified its presence in the logistics community. Today, DLIS is the centralized activity responsible for gathering data, researching information and preparing transactions for stock listing of new supply items and for maintaining NSN information. The NSN is the key to materiel management for the information needed for acquisition, financial management, demilitarization, hazardous material, freight, packaging and pilferage reduction. Many logistics systems rely on NSN

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data to make automated decisions about stockage and reordering.

Army Cataloging

The Army Cataloging Division (DLIS-KA) is the cataloging center for major subordinate commands. The division comprises three branches: Air, Land and Marine (DLIS-KAL); General and Troop Support (DLIS-KAG); and Communications and Electronics (DLIS-KAE). Each division has two sections, each responsible for the cataloging and provisioning support functions for its respective command. DLIS-KAL provides services for the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command (air and missile) and TACOM-Warren, MI (land and marine). DLIS-KAG provides services for TACOM-Natick, MA (troop support) and TACOM-Rock Island, IL (general).

DLIS-KAE provides services for the U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command, both communications and electronic equipment. All branches provide services for the Army's management of supply items, such as provisioning support, emergency NSN assignments, supply support request processing, maintenance actions for user information, FSC, item name determination, descriptive characteristics, reference number maintenance and cataloging collaboration requests.
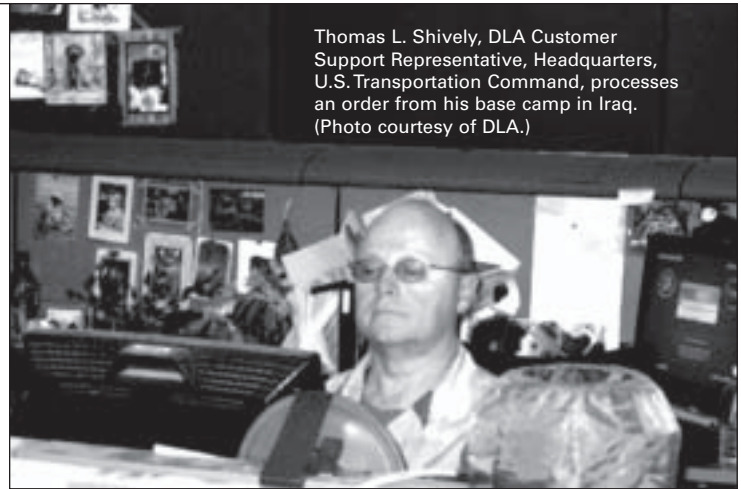
Thomas L. Shively, DLA Customer Support Representative, Headquarters, U.S. Transportation Command, processes an order from his base camp in Iraq. (Photo courtesy of DLA.)

DOD EMALL

The DOD Electronic MALL (EMALL) is a single entry point for buyers to find and acquire commercial-off-the-shelf goods from suppliers and government sources. An example of its effectiveness can be seen through the partnership between the Naval Supply Systems Command, Mechanicsburg, PA, and DLA. The Navy uses DOD EMALL as the online hosting and ordering system to support Navy purchase card users. Currently, the Navy Fleet and Industrial Supply Center contracting centers have added more than 300 commercial catalogs to support historical purchase card buying patterns to meet the Navy's needs. Users can access DOD EMALL through One Touch Support using a single sign on.

DOD EMALL provides numerous benefits for customers such as reduced prices through negotiation with vendors for discounted prices that more closely match wholesale rather than retail. Secondly, customers will often see competition on commercial items. Also, customers can identify mandatory source items such as those that must be obtained from *Javits-Wagner-O'Day* suppliers. Customers can also see Material Safety Data Sheets for hazardous items, if included by suppliers. Finally, customers are provided the convenience of online ordering at their workplace, rather than the

inconvenience of driving from store to store or calling several vendors for information or to place orders.

FED LOG

The FED LOG system provides user-friendly interfaces to quickly and easily retrieve information on more than 7.6 million NSNs and more than 13.7 million part numbers. Available on CD or digital video discs, the product contains basic NSN information, characteristics data and drawings. In March, an icon was added to FED LOG to allow users with Internet access to link with the Web-based version of the FLIS known as "WebFLIS." This allows FED LOG users to obtain the most current information available instead of data that was current at the time the disc was prepared.

"This is the real-time link that has never been achievable in FED LOG before," explained FED LOG Program Manager Joe Layton. "Rest assured, when users in the field are ordering parts, they need to know that the price has not significantly increased since they received their last copy of FED LOG on CD."

The basic information and characteristics data are updated monthly while the drawings CD-ROM is updated quarterly. Additional FED LOG information is located at **www.dlis.dla.mil/fedlog**.

DLIS Virtual Representative

"Phyllis" is the DLIS virtual representative hosted on the DLIS Web site (**http://www.dla.mil/dlis**), which debuted May 21, 2001. Customers can ask Phyllis the same questions they'd ask a human agent. Phyllis can answer common or most frequently asked questions identified from an analysis of past customer contact responses. She provides the unique capability to help customers quickly navigate through layers of Web pages to locate the information they need by simply responding to a question phrased in natural language. In addition, Phyllis has been successfully linked to several DLIS databases that provide customers with a unique ability to ask a question and have her search the appropriate database for a response. Sample questions include:

- What is the Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code for General Motors?
- Who is CAGE code 80063?
- What is FSC 5820?

Phyllis can also provide suggested topics to the customer identifying what she knows about a given topic.

DLA Map Catalog

The DLA Map Catalog is another area where DLIS uses its expertise in logistics information to offer an interactive catalog. The catalog features point-and-click technology to help customers produce a Military Standard Requisitioning and Issue Procedures-compliant order that can be submitted online. The materials in the catalog are produced at the Richmond Mapping Facility (RMF), which was formed in April 1998 when it assumed the inventory and distribution functions of mapping logistics from the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency.

The RMF comprises two entities — Defense Supply Center Richmond (DSCR) and the Defense Distribution Mapping Activity — and is responsible for the supply management of an estimated 90,000 NSNs in four FSCs: 7641 (aeronautical), 7644 (digital), 7642 (hydrographic) and 7643 (topographic). RMF also manages several special programs for the Armed Forces and specified commands including Fleet Allowance and Flight Information Publications.

Topographic charts are maps that present the vertical position of features in measurable form, as well as their horizontal positions. Topographic maps show a terrain's shape and elevation in precise detail by using contour lines. They range from general wall maps and simple briefing graphics to accurate topographic line maps and inclusive city graphics.

DLIS helps Army logisticians overcome the challenges of fighting a war in a Joint and coalition environment by managing logistics information for supply items used by U.S. and international forces fighting in Iraq, such as the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) and the Australian Army. Here, Australian Army MAJ Michael Cook and USMC MAJ Kenneth Oldham greet an Iraqi security guard at the Hands of Victory parade grounds in Baghdad. (U.S. Marine Corps photo.)

Small-scale products are intended for strategic decisions and missions. Large-scale products are intended for mass dissemination and acknowledging cross-country information.

To receive the *DLA Map Catalog* on automatic distribution, contact DSCR at (800) 826-0342 or visit the Web site at **www.dscr.dla.mil/rmf/**.

DRMS

"A major component of DRMS's job is to identify what items are reusable and keep costs down, but it is also important to know the proper way to dispose of items that are not reusable," explained Mike Kelley, DRMS' Chief of International Logistics.

"We want to be a good steward of the environment — that's our No. 1 priority," Kelley remarked. "We always operate to moral standards. Host-nation laws are very different, but even in ones without specific waste disposal laws; we're not going to go below moral guidelines."

"Whatever items can be reused usually are turned in as a battle group leaves an area and are reissued to the new battle group coming in," Kelley continued. Such was the case when U.S. Army troops were leaving the Balkans. When Soldiers there redeployed, much of the installation facilities were literally "pulled out" and were sent to Iraq to be used in the GWOT.

As the troops depart, some bases — such as Camp Comanche, Balkans — are left standing empty. That is when the "harvest" begins as the physical features are dismantled. Harvested, reusable materials can either be redistributed in the Balkans, the European theater or other operational areas such as Iraq. As always, DRMS' goal is to effectively reuse as much material as possible.

Supporting the Reserve Component

Besides supporting National Guard and Reserve units, DLIS and DRMS are among the many employers nationwide who supported the citizen soldiery in their ranks. Among those deployed was Virgil Akins, who quickly transformed from a DLIS marketing specialist back into a Soldier when he was needed to serve in Bosnia. Akins' mission was to help oversee aspects of U.S. medical assistance there and to ensure the safety, health and well-being of enlisted Soldiers.

Likewise, Todd Kaminski went from overseeing the Quality of Life Office at Battle Creek to influencing the combat environment as the Combat Engineer Officer for the II Marine Expeditionary Force.

"We measure our successes each day when the Iraqi government and Iraqis take control of more activities in their country, and it is happening," Kaminski wrote in a letter from Fallujah, Iraq.

CATHY SKELDING is a Supply Management Specialist for the DLIS Army Cataloging Division in Battle Creek. The majority of her 33-year career has been in the logistics and cataloging arena, working for Defense Logistics Service Center, the Air Force Cataloging and Standardization Center and for DLIS Army Cataloging. She received her Acquisition Professional Development Program Acquisition Logistics Certification from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in 1994.

Defense National Stockpile Center (DNSC) Sells Excess Materials

DNSC, a field activity under the Defense Logistics Agency, is selling excess strategic and critical materials, including metals, ores and minerals. *Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 8.002 Priorities for Use of Government Supply Sources* addresses how agencies should satisfy requirements for supplies from government sources. *FAR 8.003 Use of Other Government Supply Sources* stipulates how agencies should satisfy their need for the metals, ores and minerals from available DNSC inventories. These materials can be purchased through agency-to-agency arrangements not subject to normal competitive commercial sales procedures. Examples of agency use of DNSC materials include using titanium on the M1 Abrams tank refit, using tungsten on Navy vessels, using germanium on night vision equipment and using tannin for treating the leather on Army berets.

For more information, call Cheryl Deister or Jennifer Iribarren at the DNSC Contracts Office, 703-767-5475 or 703-767-5487 or visit DNSC's Web site at **https://www.dnsc.dla.mil/default.asp**.